The Bureau of Missions,
Bible House, New York.
1385

Medical Work in Japan

Pam. med. miss.

BY

JOHN C. BERRY, M. D.

1904

Woman's Board of Missions
Congregational House
Boston

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

https://archive.org/details/medicalworkinjap00berr

Medical Work in Japan.

BY DR. JOHN C. BERRY
For twenty-one years Medical Missionary of the A. B. C. F. M.

MEDICAL Missions originated with our Lord. The miracles of healing which followed his Sermon on the Mount became rapidly known throughout Capernaum, and "when even was come" the sick of the city were carried to him. Parents with children, friend with friend, "all they that had sick with divers diseases brought them unto him," filling the yard and street about the house. The great heart of the Saviour was touched, divine authority went out in human sympathy, and he graciously "laid his hand on every one of them and healed them." In companies they returned to their homes, and a city of forty thousand souls rejoiced in the restoration of its sick to health. The work was done, rest secured, and the Great Physician himself then sought the stillness and seclusion of Nature, and held communion with his Father.

Such was the first Christian dispensary ser-

vice. Luke follows this account with the record, "Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people"—a record of the first Medical Missionary tour. Indeed, during all the active life of our Lord he made prominent this service of healing, and in his final instructions to his disciples said, "Into whatsoever city ye enter and they receive you heal the sick that are therein and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you".

The apostles and early disciples to whom was thus committed power over disease, were faithful in heeding their Lord's command, and the Acts of the Apostles stand as the report of the first Medical Missionary Society. "By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people," and, "then came multitudes out of the cities round about Jerusalem bringing sick folk and them that were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed, every one."

This Christ method of bringing salvation to the entire man continued in the early church until it became evident that the gift of healing had been withheld, when the founding of Christian hospitals assumed prominence, several of such institutions being in existence at the time

of the Council of Nicea — one of the articles of that conference enumerating the necessary qualifications of a Christian hospital steward.

Such has been the origin of medical missions, such the spirit in which they are conducted today; and the noble results of such work in Japan show them to be as applicable now as a means of revealing God's love to men as when Christ was on earth. Wherever men sin and suffer, a practical application to their needs of the teaching of the parable of the Good Samaritan is sure to touch the heart, allay prejudice, win confidence, and awaken a warm spirit of personal gratitude; and this especially in the mission field. Oriental peoples generally regard the *cause* of disease as some distinct entity — a malignant spirit sent into the individual as a punishment for his sins, the severity of his suffering being in proportion to the extent of his previous wrong doing. One of the popular names of leprosy in Japan is *Ten-kei-byo* — Heaven's punishment disease. This theory of the origin of disease too frequently alienates from the sufferer the sympathy of relatives and friends, and leads to neglect and censorious criticism. This discourages the patient and hardens his character. To all this the spirit of Christ is in striking contrast; hence the tremendous strength of the medical missionary in the community, and the far-reaching influence of the mission

hospital, in preparing the way for the Gospel and in exemplifying its teachings. Indeed, the experience of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, when priest and people sought to offer sacrifice, is being re-enacted today in the experience of many medical missionaries. The writer painfully recalls such an attempt at worship when engaged in medical work at Kakugawa, and again later at Ogaki, when at the head of the Surgical Relief Corps of the Doshisha Hospital for the relief of earthquake sufferers.

The origin of disease being thus intimately associated with sin in the heathen mind, the treatment becomes a religious rite, and the priest frequently controls the ceremony. This, therefore, gives increased religious significance to the work of the medical missionary, and when accompanied by instruction which enables the patients and their friends to know that the kindness received is but the application to human needs of the wonderful act of redemption, the feeling of profound gratitude to the physician becomes transmuted into profounder love to God. Idols, temples, heathen ceremonies and means of gratifying unbridled passions await the restored patient as he returns to old associations, and the true medical missionary never allows his patient to pass beyond his influence without giving him a knowledge of God's commands and of a Saviour's love.

Thus in the dignity and grandeur of his mission the medical missionary is strong in his work as he seeks to render his service in Christ's spirit, in Christ's name, and by Christ's authority.

American Christians were the first to restore medical work to its place in modern missionary operations. In 1819 Dr. John Scudder was sent to Ceylon. So apparent was the benefit of his work to the mission that medical men were soon added to the working force of the American Board. Dr. Asa Dodge was sent to the Syrian field in 1832, Dr. Nathan Ward to Ceylon in 1833, Dr. Peter Parker to China in 1834, and Drs. Adams and Wilson to South Africa, and Dr. Grant to Persia in 1835. These were the pioneers of a long line of medical missionaries — the American Board alone having sent out since then one hundred and fourteen physicians, twenty of them women. The first lady physician sent out by Congregationalists was, I believe, (Miss) M. L. Wadsworth, M. D., who went to Turkey in 1871.

Dr. James C. Hepburn, now living at East Orange, New Jersey, in his ninetieth year, was the first medical missionary to Japan. He had labored at Singapore in 1840, and at Amoy from 1841 to 1846, laying the foundation of a work that has since spread over the entire Fokien province. Compelled to return to this

country by the ill health of Mrs. Hepburn, he settled in New York, where he soon built up a lucrative practice, which he conducted for thirteen years. With this thorough preparation for effective work, he reached Kanagawa in October, 1859, as the representative of the Presbyterian church. A Buddhist temple was secured for residence, the idols removed, and the building converted into a Christian home. The rigid edicts against Christianity made it a prohibited faith, but Dr. Hepburn began at once a religious service in his house, to which foreign residents were invited. Unable, however, because of the opposition of the Japanese authorities, to establish a hospital and dispensary at Kanagawa he purchased property in Yokohama in 1862. Here, on the foreign concession, he was able to conduct his work without opposition.

In 1863, at the earnest request of a Japanese physician, who wished an education for his grand-daughter, Mrs. Hepburn began a school for girls — "the mustard seed of education for women and girls in Japan." "Japanese women are without understanding," said the emperor in 1871. "A stupid woman is less troublesome in the family than one that is wise," was the sentiment of Confucius. And yet, within twenty-five years from the beginning of Mrs. Hepburn's school, a million and a half Japanese

girls were under school instruction. Today the aim of the government is, "no village with an ignorant family, and no family with an ignorant member."

For fifteen years Dr. Hepburn continued in active medical work, performing many surgical operations till then unknown in Japan. As an oculist he attained a high degree of skill, while his gentle manner and kindly sympathy made him a most valuable worker in those early days of strong anti-foreign prejudice and bitter hatred of Christianity. He had the full confidence of the foreign community, who contributed liberally toward the support of his dispensary. He would never take any renumeration for his work, holding, wisely, that this was given in Christ's name as a ministry of service to the people, and was above pecuniary reward. At the age of sixty years he withdrew from active medical practice and devoted his time to literary and evangelistic work. He prepared the first English-Japanese dictionary, a work of superior excellence, took a leading part in the translation of the New Testament scriptures, and prepared a Japanese Bible Dictionary. For forty years he labored as physician, evangelist, translator and lexicographer. His eminent service for Japan has been highly esteemed by her people, but she still remains immensely his debtor.

Some day may there be a monument erected to the memory of Japan's first Medical Missionary.

In November of 1859 the Reformed Church of America (Dutch) sent to Kanagawa Dr. D. B. Simmons, the second medical missionary to reach Japan. After a year of effort Dr. Simmons resigned from the service of his Board and engaged in private practice. He was a most agreeable and lovable character, and exerted a refining influence among the Japanese, by whom he was greatly loved and respected.

In May, 1872 the writer was sent by the American Board as its first medical missionary to Japan. He was cordially welcomed by the Mission, who, during all the years of his service, loyally co-operated with him in every possible way to make his work a success. A few months after reaching Kobe, he accepted, with the advice of the Mission, the position of Director of the International Hospital, where he was also permitted to have a dispensary for the Japanese and wards for in-patients. A year later he resigned and accepted the appointment of Foreign Director of the Prefectural Hospital, in connection with which service, and with the co-operation of Japanese physicians, he established dispensaries in Akashi, Kakugawa, Himegi, Sanda, Arima and Hiogo. In these dispensary buildings Christian services

were held, thus constituting the beginnings of Christian interest and of Christian organization in these localities. Christian physicians connected with these medical services became officers and leading members of the churches later organized. About this time a government regulation provided that no licenses should be granted to physicians to practice after the Chinese system of medicine, but that all new applicants for medical practice would be required to pass an examination in western medical science. This popularized at once our system of medicine, and sent to the hospitals and dispensaries throngs of men, young and old, eager to learn, and who, at every dispensary service, would bring their difficult cases for consultation and treatment.

Five years later the writer became similarly connected with the Okayama Prefectural Hospital, and there established, as at Kobe, and with like results, dispensary stations in the surrounding towns, and five years later still, established the Doshisha Hospital and Training School for Nurses at Kyoto. The first five thousand dollars for the founding of this latter work was contributed by ladies, and annual appropriations were regularly made by the Woman's Board of Missions, Boston. Miss Linda Richards, now of the Training School of the Worcester Insane Hospital, was the first

superintendent, and Dr. Sara Buckley medical associate. This was the first nurse's school proposed for Japan, and the first established under missionary auspices. It is one of the highest and most productive forms of missionary service, and should have a place in every mission where there is medical work.

Of this medical work and its influence during the "seventies" and early "eighties" Rev. Dr. John H. De Forest writes: "It is like a dream in these days of absolute freedom of travel and work to look back only thirty years and see how medcal men were in the vanguard of the missionaries, going before them, allaying the apprehensions, and changing the prejudices of the people, and thus preparing the way for the wide proclamation of the Gospel. They were the ones who made it possible to hire houses and open preaching places, where otherwise it would not have been done for long years." The founding of the hospital and training school at Kyoto was a powerful factor in removing local prejudice against our Christian college there.

Dr. Henry Lanning was the next medical missionary to reach Japan, coming under the auspices of the American Episcopal church, July 4, 1873. After three months he secured rooms in a Japanese house near the Foreign Concession, Osaka, for a dispensary, where his work was carried on until the spring of 1880,

when the St. Barnabas Hospital was built and occupied. He is still connected with this hospital, which, under his skill and management, has become self-supporting. The statistics for the year ending June 30, 1904, are as follows: Visits by out-patients, 9,390, of which 2,815 were charity cases. New cases, 3,420; visits made to patients at their homes, 480: treated in the wards, 81; number of days of treatment of in-patients, 2,100. The salutary influence of this noble work has gone to the remotest regions of Central Japan.

Dr. R. B. Teusler, a later appointment under the same Board, is in charge of St. Luke's Hospital, in Tokyo. This is one of the largest of the present mission hospitals in Japan. Located at the capital, it has a large field of operations, and does a most acceptable work for both Japanese and foreigners. The Episcopal church gives increasing attention to medical work, having seven dispensaries and hospitals out of a total of fourteen now in the country.

Dr. Wallace Taylor, of Oberlin, was the second physician to reach the field under the American Board. He came both as an ordained clergyman and graduate in medicine, and was ready, therefore, to take up either branch of service. On reaching Kobe, he accompanied the writer on a medical tour to Akashi, Kakugawa, and Himeji. On the third

day of this service, being recalled to Osaka on account of illness in the Mission, he remained to carry on the service, Mrs. Berry acting as interpreter. So impressed was he with the opportunities for medical work at that stage of missionary effort, that he decided to devote his time wholly to this line of service. He is still on the field (Osaka) where for thirty years he has, with signal ability as a surgeon, conducted a work of magnitude. He also visits Hiogo once a week, and, in company with Japanese physicians, carries on the work at the Hiogo dispensary.

Dr. Arthur H. Adams, of Sandusky, Ohio, reached Japan, under the American Board, November, 1874. A graduate of Wesleyan University, of Yale College (1867) of Yale Seminary (1872) and of Yale Medical School (1874), he brought to his work rare gifts and accomplishments. Tactful in his co-operation with the Japanese, magnanimous and self-sacrificing, he soon won a place in the hearts of his friends, who cherish for him still the highest regard and fondest recollection. In connection with Japanese physicians in Osaka, he established there a well-organized medical work, which is now carried on by Dr. Taylor. He died of typhoid fever Nov. 23, 1879. He was greatly beloved.

Shortly after this the United Presbyterian

Church of Scotland sent to the field Dr. H. Faulds, to be located at Tokyo. He was the first physician sent out from Great Britain. He was a man of exceptional ability, an easy writer, a good speaker, and of scientific attainments. He established a promising work, but soon retired from the field.

The Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society now sent out Dr. Palm. He was an ideal missionary. Of exceptional ability both as a physician and as a surgeon, he established, and for about ten years conducted, a large work at Niigata. He was a forceful speaker, and his large capacity for work enabled him to do much to carry forward both the religious and medical work of his station. He needed help, however, and in its absence he was forced to retire from the field, when the station passed under the care of the American Board. An active and consecrated body of Christians, and a wide-spread influence for good was the result of Dr. Palm's successful work in the populous and wealthy province of Niigata.

Dr. McDonald, of Canada, next came, under the auspices of the Canadian Methodist Board of Missions. For several years he resided at Shidzuoka, and later in Tokyo. He has an impressive personality, is a physician of unusual ability, renders a most acceptable service to missionaries and others, and has the full confi-

dence of all who know him. He is highly respected by the Japanese.

I cannot close this personal reference to the medical missionary force of Japan without mentioning another who in unconnected with any mission board — Dr. W. Norton Whitney. Inheriting from his sainted mother a strong love for the Japanese people, he sought and obtained from Washington an appointment as interpreter to the United States Legation at Tokyo. He early established a Christian hospital and dispensary for the Japanese, and invited to his aid native Christian associates. It was soon found that the hospital work would not permit a divided strength, and so, in a spirit of heroic self-sacrifice, he resigned his official position at the Legation, and gave himself entirely to this medical service. From his work in Tokyo an influence has radiated to the most distant portions of the realm. For seventeen years this work has been carried on, during which time about twenty thousand people have received medical help, and learned as well of the preciousness of the Gospel of Christ. Dr. Whitney is widely recognized as an oculist of ability, and he is a most devout Bible student. In this noble work of consecration Dr. Whitney is ably supported by his wife, an English lady of refinement and great intelligence. His work is chiefly supported by friends in

England and America, and by gifts in Japan.

Reference to the work for lepers in Tokyo at Miss Youngman's asylum, and to that at Koyama under the care of the Roman Catholic Church must not be omitted from the list. Leprosy is a great scourge among the Japanese, and one of the most pathetic sights to be seen in that fair land is the mendicant leper wandering from shrine to shrine and from temple to temple in the vain hope of receiving miraculous relief. The mistaken idea that the disease is transmitted by heredity still prevails, and social ostracism is therefore sternly applied to every member of a family containing a leper. Concealment of their misfortune is the first instinct in the minds of these unfortunates, and by confinement within the family circle its members are constantly exposed to the dangers of this communicable disease. No remedy for its successful treatment has yet been discovered, and the removal of these unfortunates from families and communities to asylums is a great blessing. No form of Christian charity is more appreciated than this.

Among missionary workers in the Farther East — Japan, Korea and China — there is a firm conviction that they are about to witness the greatest victories of the Cross yet realized by the church. In Japan is already seen a nation born in a day. Within the active life of a

single missionary worker has been seen the evolution of the soldier from one bearing spear and bow to the irrisistibte hero of Liaoyang; from gross darkness and prejudice of her people to intelligent, open-minded receptivity: from revolting idolatry, to exalted spiritual conceptions of God. In her departments of government, law, education, diplomacy, and in a considerable proportion of her family life, she is essentially Christian. In her great struggle now with Russia her victory means an extension of the Christian ideals of religious and political liberty among all the peoples of the East. The present is a crisis among the nations there. It is a time for the preparation of which the providences of God have long been active, one for which these nations have long waited. In their weakness and need, they are looking to the Christian nations of the West for instruction, protection and spiritual leadership. In this hour of unparalleled opportunity, Medical Missions — the highest form of applied Christian charity — will, in co-operation with the church, perform for Korea and China the work so successfully accomplished for Japan.